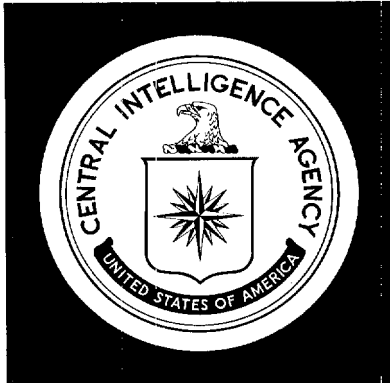


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YUGOSLAVIA: Tito has called for an immediate party reorganization. (Page 8)

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YUGOSLAVIA: President Tito has called for an immediate reorganization of the Yugoslav Communist Party to meet problems generated by the country's decentralization and concomitant rise in republic nationalism.

Speaking over the weekend to the trade union presidium, the aging Yugoslav President declared he would not wait for the party conference on 25-26 January to begin this reorganization, but that "action has already begun." Tito defended last week's purge of Croatian nationalists by specifically raising the specter of foreign (read Soviet) intervention. Had the situation gone unchecked, he predicted a "civil war" might have ensued--"I could not have allowed someone else to come and restore peace and order."

A compact, well-disciplined party is envisioned, but a clearer reading on the specifics of the reorganization should come today when the 23rd party presidium meets in Belgrade. Tito's address was a strong rebuttal to those both in Croatia and elsewhere who had used the relatively freer political climate of recent months to play on regional nationalism and demand decentralization be extended into the party--a demand totally unacceptable to Tito, who believes the federal party should remain the dominant authority in Yugoslavia.

Tito's words did not indicate any large-scale back-pedaling from the decentralization already carried out in the government. But regional nationalism in the party will not be tolerated and any challenge to the federal party's authority will be dealt with quickly and severely.

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